

## A Pantheon of Fraternity

Nahiara Andres\*

It is a lonely existence, that which is not plagued by the company of friends. No human can claim that they enjoyed their passing through the terrestrial plane without sharing the most exceptional escapades with those you can also share the occasional 3 a.m. colloquy, when profound words are spoken only to be followed by hour long fits of laughter. And it is not the mere fact that they exist, but the plethora of them that we may encounter and slowly, but surely, add to our *friendstuary* which makes it worthwhile to be on the lookout for them.

In a world in which all divinity seems to have been lost, one can find in friendships the invisible hands of deities, they shape the lives of those one most honours. There is at least one among the entries of each *friendstuary* who carries the weight of leadership as if the universe itself were carried on their shoulders. Their insight is sought after like thunder follows lightning, for they command with the innate force of a thousand storms, flooding existence with irremovable solace and incessant companionship. In the following pages appears a friend whose gaze pierces into the chaos of the world like an owl's gaze pierces into the night. This friend has the power to settle disputes like an army "settles" a war, ingrained in them is the art of strategy. With a word of wisdom and a keen eye for detail, they can lead you through a labyrinth of turmoil, coming out to a clearing of understanding.

Divinely influenced, some people reflect a godly essence into their relationships, much like those whose presence is like sunlight piercing the clouds. They are the ones who speak to us in music, in poetry, in art. Those who radiate harmony with each laughter, light with each smile, and who remind us that there is beauty in every corner of our lives. Amid all the laughter and conversation, there is also one who moves at a gentler rhythm, whose presence is a calming draught to wounded hearts. They are not as commanding as the Leaders, nor as insightful as the Wise Ones, but they are as essential as a mother is to her babe. This friend nurtures the group with strength, making sure that no one ever goes hungry, deprived of food, of love, or of a shoulder to cry on. Yet one cannot catalogue the Nurturers without the one friend that makes them indispensable. He whose eyes flash with the intensity of a herd of wild boars. He who rushes into adventure, into conflict with the fervour of a warrior. Quick burst into anger, he burns with a passion that is both a blessing and a curse, for he is also quick to stand up for those he cares about. Because, as his patron god has well taught him, some battles must be fought.

Much like an antithesis of the Artists, there is one entry in some people's *friendstuary* that lurks in the shadows, keeping mostly to themselves and speaking only when they feel the time is ripe. With the driest of humours and the deepest of thoughts, as deep as the undermost reigns of the world —and though they might seem incredibly distant—, they are as loyal as a three-headed dog. Living in the umbra, they are able to understand that life is not always as bright as we might want it to be, yet they are the prime example that even in darkness, there is strength. Then, like a burst of laughter on a quiet night, there is the life-of-the-party, a whirlwind of joy and chaos who can teach you not to take everything so seriously. Wherever they go, a party follows, and with them every gathering is a festival. They are the masters of rebels and, under their influence, anyone can remember to dance, drink, laugh and enjoy life's simplest pleasures. Yet, every group needs that one friend that acts like the thread that connects them all. It is that friend who is always in motion, going a thousand miles an hour. With a quick joke and a quicker grin, they dart from one friend to another, making sure that everyone is comfortable. While doing this, of course, they gather intel about the slightest details, which are then passed

---

\* 1º mención del Concurso Literario USAL en Lengua Inglesa – Categoría ensayo (2024).

on at every stop they make. For these friends are not only bridges but also gossips, with their chatter they can talk their way out of any situation and talk their way into the hearts of everyone they meet.

When the Titanomachy was won and the Olympians took their place as the main deities of the Greek Pantheon, each God reigned supreme over their own domain. A vivid tapestry of personalities and roles that enriched life as the Greeks knew it was created. The New Gods took on the responsibilities left behind by the Titans, and no aspect of life was left unattended. Just as, the myriad of friends that one can make throughout different experiences in life play special roles in the creation of our own Olympus. Each God embodies qualities that mirror those we find in the friendships we cherish. The Nurturer is responsible for the safety of the Warrior, and the Blabbermouth is responsible for retelling the tale when the Warrior ultimately ends up with a fractured bone. A whole new tapestry is woven from those relationships, where each character is intrinsically interlaced with each other. Without one, the weaving would be incomplete and life would easily wear at the edges.